

## **Testimony of Mark W. Stahl**

### **Ottawa County Commissioner**

#### **Before the Ohio Senate**

##### **Committee on Energy and Public Utilities**

##### **Hearing on Ohio Senate Bill 346**

**November 17, 2020**

Chairman Wilson, Vice-Chairman McColley, Ranking Member Williams and members of the Ohio Senate Energy and Public Utilities Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide written opponent testimony on Senate Bill 346 (SB 346) to Repeal HB 6 of the 133<sup>rd</sup> Ohio General Assembly. The citizens and businesses of our county, our region and our nation depend upon a resilient and reliable energy portfolio that is both affordable and secure and produced by a diverse energy mix. HB 6 is a long overdue modernization of Ohio's energy policy. By upholding HB 6 lawmakers can ensure nuclear energy generation remains a vital part of our energy mix.

My name is Mark Stahl and I am an Ottawa County Commissioner. I am writing today on behalf of the more than 700 dedicated employees at the Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station and the associated jobs, tax revenue and economic contributions that they make to Ottawa County and the state of Ohio. I think it's important to note that the Davis-Besse power station not only provides these much-needed, highly specialized jobs, but it also contributes to Ohio's clean-energy efforts, providing a steady, reliable and zero-emissions power source for Ohio homes and businesses. As a County Commissioner, I proudly serve the citizens who call Ottawa County home. Through the Commissioner's annual

budget process, it is our goal to appropriate county funds in ways that foster opportunity, quality of life and economic growth for every one of those residents. Ottawa County is a wonderful place to live, raise a family and operate a business and it is my responsibility to ensure it remains that way for a long time to come. It is why I decided to become a commissioner and it is why the future of Ohio's nuclear power plants including the Davis Besse plant in my county is so important to me.

If our nuclear fleet is forced to close early, these jobs would disappear and so too would our state's energy independence. In fact, if Ohio loses its two nuclear plants, it is estimated that we would need to start importing up to 15 percent more energy from out of state to fill the gap left by nuclear. In addition, 90 percent of Ohio's zero-carbon electric power generation and over 25 percent of Ohio's entire electric energy portfolio is lost and will not return.

Our current energy policy recognizes the fact that our largest source of clean, carbon-free energy – nuclear power – makes important contributions to our state's economy, environment and energy grid. The energy policy further recognizes homegrown sources of carbon free energy – that includes wind, solar, nuclear and others. Short term market conditions are suggesting decommissioning long term strategic assets. These conditions dictate that energy supply decisions be based on the lowest short-term cost, ignoring the long-term considerations that were once analyzed by state utility commissions. We need to consider the value that nuclear plants deliver to our electric system – a carbon free resource that can reliably operate around the clock, with enough fuel on site to operate constantly for up to a year regardless of the weather.

We must acknowledge that the current SB 346 will push us into a scenario where nearly all our energy will come from a single fuel source – natural gas – along with some renewables. Abandoning the industry best practice of “fuel diversity” equates to putting all of our eggs in one basket and puts us at risk of unpredictable energy prices and electric supply disruptions on the hottest and coldest days of the year when we can least manage them.

**We are grateful by the efforts of the Ohio Senate Public Utilities Committee and respectfully urge the committee to uphold HB 6 to maintain an energy plan that keeps critical baseload long term assets in operations. Ottawa County is encouraged by the support received by other county governments in our region. Ohio is stronger when working together to support our energy policy that will take us into the future. I urge you to recognize the benefits that nuclear energy brings to our state and recognize the nuclear power stations in Ottawa and Lake Counties that proudly deliver such benefits that will preserve the immense employment, economic, and environmental benefits that carbon-free sources of power provide to our region. Our dedicated employees simply want to continue doing the important work of producing carbon free energy to power our communities Please take these viewpoints into consideration and uphold House Bill 6.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of Ottawa County.**